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express the most general and particular things. The combination of several sounds, or long words, express the more complex ideas.

“Such a regular system of speech seems to prove, that man originally made use of only simple sounds to convey ideas, or that the mind, without communication, received it in its more complex form, or—that language was imparted to the first man perfectly constructed.

“A very great number of compound words, resolvable to their primitives in Welsh, run through many languages.

“There are, in the Welsh, words perfectly similar in sound to the mythologic names of the antient world, answering to most of the explanations given by Gebelin and Bryant. It would be difficult to adduce a single article or form of construction in the Hebrew grammar, which is not to be found in Welsh; and there are many whole sentences in both languages precisely the same, in the very words. The Irish and Welsh are, fundamentally, the same, but differing much in dialect and pronunciation. The Slavonic, Breton, and Welsh, are one language, with but little variation of dialect, which I conceive to be an important discovery. The Slavons and Welsh having been a separate people from a very remote period militates greatly against the common notion of the instability of language.

“There is not the least difference between the language of the laws of Hywel in the tenth or of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s History in the twelfth century and that now spoken in Wales.

“Some may be apt to condemn the above as rather visionary; but, if any should be inclined to point out what seems improbable, perhaps I may be able to bring forward many extraordinary proofs in support of what is advanced.

“Your’s, &c.

MEIRION.”

ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS.

REV. EDWARD LLWYD’S COLLECTION.

It is well known to the readers of Welsh literature that the Rev. Edward Llwyd, the celebrated author of *Archæologia Britannica*, had formed a valuable and extensive collection of Welsh MSS. These consisted as well of ancient MSS. as of others of his own writing, which had a more immediate reference to the great plan; he had in contemplation, of publishing a second vo-

lume of his elaborate work, and which the want of adequate encouragement seems to have prevented him from accomplishing. In some observations on the present state of Welsh MSS., prefixed to one of the volumes of the "Archæology of Wales," it is stated, that Mr. Llwyd "*left* this collection to Sir John Sebright." This, however, was not strictly the fact; for it appears from some letters, preserved amongst the Harleian MSS.* in the British Museum, that the collection in question was, in fact, *sold* to Sir Thomas Sebright, for the benefit of Mr. Llwyd's estate. This happened in 1713, four years after Mr. Llwyd's death; and we are also informed by the same documents, that this sale was not effected until both the University and Jesus College had refused to become purchasers, a circumstance, which is the more remarkable, as it was well known at the time, that, had Mr. Llwyd's affairs permitted him, it was his intention to bequeath his collection equally between Jesus College and the University. What the motives were, that occasioned the rejection of so favourable an opportunity for preserving these valuable remains, it would now, perhaps, be vain to enquire; but it has, unfortunately, become a matter of serious regret, that the learned bodies alluded to were not actuated, on the occasion, by a more zealous spirit, considering the untoward fate, to which these MSS. have since been consigned.

It farther appears from the documents above quoted, that, after the contract with Sir Thomas Sebright had been completed, Lord Oxford, ignorant of the circumstance, made overtures for the purchase of all these MSS., which, if they had fortunately become his property, would, no doubt, have now formed a part of the famous Harleian collection. But a singular and mortifying fatality seems to have, altogether, attended Mr. Llwyd's labours in this instance,—excluded, as they were, from Jesus College, the Bodleian Library, and the British Museum, in either of which depositaries they would have found a secure asylum. The MSS., thus bought by Sir Thomas Sebright, were afterwards sold, and became the property of different purchasers, among whom were Mr. Johnes of Hafod, and Sir W. W. Wynn. Such, as had fallen to the lot of the former gentleman, were consumed in the fire, which unfortunately destroyed his elegant mansion about twelve years ago; and most of those, purchased by Sir W. W.

* Vol. 3777. p. 11.

Wynn, met subsequently with a similar fate at the house of a person in London, to whom they had been sent for the purpose of being bound. The writer of this account believes also, that some catastrophe has befallen another portion of this collection; but he has no precise remembrance of the particulars, nor is he aware, if any of these ill-fated MSS. still remain, where they are to be found.

The following details, relating to the MSS. purchased by Sir W. W. Wynn, with the accompanying remarks, cannot fail to be interesting, affording, as they do, the only consolation now left,—that of knowing the value of one portion at least of the literary stores, thus irretrievably lost. The catalogue comprises, likewise, it will be seen, some other part of the Wynnstay collection unhappily involved in the same calamity: and it must enhance its interest to mention, that it was the work of that learned individual, the late Rev. Peter Roberts, whose memory must ever be dear to the admirers of our national literature.

* * *

Some Account of MSS., which lately belonged to the valuable collection of Sir W. W. Wynn, Bart. and were unfortunately destroyed by the fire in Covent Garden.

The loss of MSS. is one, which, though its more immediate estimation must regard the personal property in them, must also be considered as affecting the public interest, according to their importance to the literature of the country. It is, therefore, with great regret in both respects that another loss, similar to the one at Hafod, is recorded, which will be deeply felt by all, who are interested in the antiquities of Wales or Ireland.

The collection of MSS. at Wynnstay is undoubtedly one of the best in Wales, and particularly as to the number of Welsh MSS.; and it had lately been enriched by a large number from the collection of the celebrated Lhwyd, the author of the *Archæologia*, purchased at the sale of the Seabright MSS. The principal part of this addition, and several of the MSS. of the previous collection being in want of new binding, it was judged expedient to send them to London for that purpose. The misfortune, that has befallen them there, has left little more to alleviate the regret for the loss than the power of stating generally what they contained, which is the more to be lamented, as it is well known

to have been the intention of their liberal owner to have had some of the most important published, and that he is indulgent in permitting every person the use of his collection.

MSS. LOST.

The WHITE BOOK of HERGEST.

This was one, and probably the latest, of two books, which bear the name of Hergest. The oldest, called the Red Book of Hergest, is now in the Library of Jesus College, Oxford*. Both were miscellaneous collections in prose and verse. The White Book was particularly valuable as containing some old Welsh laws, and, particularly, a Specification of the Charter of Hywel Dda, which was not known to Wotton, and which explained much of the motives and purpose of that prince in his revisal of the Welsh laws. A copy of this is at present in the possession of Sir W. W. Wynn. The remainder consisted of religious tracts, one on heraldry, historical notices, and poems. Most of the latter are still to be found in other collections at Wynnstay.

Four Copies of the LAWS of HYWEL DDA, whole or in part.

Four Copies of GEOFFREY of MONMOUTH'S HISTORY, one in Latin, the remainder, I believe, in Welsh. [One of the Welsh copies appeared to have been written about the latter end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century, at the latest, and was remarkable for the correct orthography of the proper names. In a note at the end, but which was written in a later hand, this copy was said to have been taken from the last copy published by Geoffrey.]

A WELSH CHRONICLE.

The STATUTE OF WESTMINSTER.

An ESSAY on the WELSH TRIADS, by Mr. VAUGHAN, of Hengwrt (the Antiquarian).

An ESSAY on BLATOS,—i. e. on a coin bearing the word Vlatos, which Mr. Vaughan (the above mentioned) understood to signify the Bleiddy or Bladud of the Welsh history. [An impression from this coin is given by Camden.]

Eight Volumes of Mr. LHWYD'S NOTES, taken in his tour through Wales. [The general substance of these notes was given to Bishop Gibson for his edition of Camden.]

Eleven Volumes of his NOTES, taken in his travels in Ireland and part of Scotland, marking his progress and whatever he met

* See CAMBRO-BRITON, No. 14, p. 75.